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PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

Trump Presidency: Capitalism in Disarray

The electoral victory of Donald Trump, a suit-and-tie Klansman, shows the power of racism in today's United States. The main wing of the U.S. ruling class did its best to swing the presidential race to Hillary Clinton, a more reliable stooge for finance capital and U.S. imperialism. But in spite of overwhelming support from the bosses' media, political donors, establishment politicians, and celebrity entertainers from Beyonce to LeBron James, Clinton couldn't close the deal. The vicious racism that propelled Trump to power has been stoked by Republicans and Democrats in equal measure—including the racist mass incarceration and welfare reform championed by Bill and Hillary Clinton in the 1990s— and it has come home to roost.

Workers had nothing to gain in this election. Under the rules of capitalist "democracy," we were forced to choose between two monsters: a gutter racist and sexual predator who demonized Muslims and undocumented immigrants, and a liberal racist and sexist who destroyed millions of lives as a career-long servant of the thieves of finance capital. After decades of destroying working-class families on behalf of their Wall Street patrons, Hillary and Bill Clinton were unable to deceive enough voters into believing their phony promises and lies. Workers saw the Clintons who they are: racist opportunists in the pockets of the richest bosses.

If Trump's election proved anything, it's the necessity of working outside the electoral box. Don't vote—revolt! CHALLENGE and the Progressive Labor Party urge you to join the fight for ***communist revolution.*** Join us in building a united, multiracial working class that will smash racism, sexism, national borders and the entire capitalist system.

Rulers in Crisis

The election confirmed the deep problems confronting the U.S. rulers. The bosses underestimated the impact of decades of wage-killing exploitation, economic crises, racist and sexist demagoguery, and ever-widening inequity. "It was a failure to capture the boiling anger of a large portion of the American electorate that feels left behind by a selective recovery, betrayed by trade deals that they see as threats to their jobs and disrespected by establishment Washington, Wall Street and the mainstream media" (New York Times, 11/9).

While the Trump vote was predominantly a phenomenon of white workers' alienation, Black and Latin and Asian workers have also tired of waiting for their lives to get better. Eight years of Barack Obama have resulted in mass deportations, wage stagnation, a bank bailout, and widespread disillusionment. The bosses' biggest concern relates to the waning of U.S. patriotism and how it could undermine their plans for the next major ground war. They cannot count on a cynical, disaffected working class to rally around a military draft. In short, the rulers have a lot of work to do.

Trump Will Serve the Bosses

While big finance capitalists clearly preferred the more reliable Clinton, they will most likely find a way to work with Trump and guarantee that he serves their interests, in particular their contested control over oil in the Middle East. In March, Trump was briefed by Richard Haass, the president of the Council on Foreign Relations, the main wing's preeminent, pro-imperialist think tank. "I respect Richard Haass," Trump said after the meeting. "I like him a lot." In his victory speech, Trump vowed to invest in rebuilding infrastructure, a top ruling-class priority. In the days after the election, the Dow Jones Industrial Average has hit a record high. The profit system has not missed a beat.

Another Step Toward Fascism

As British economist Martin Wolf recently noted, the capitalists are dismantling their façade of liberal democracy, the veil for the bosses' dictatorship. As the bosses' crises intensify and world war grows more likely, Wolf sees "the rise of illiberal democracies or outright plebiscitary dictatorships in which the elected ruler exercises control over both the state and capitalists" (Financial Times, 8/30). What Wolf fails to acknowledge is that the move toward fascism—a phase of capitalism where the bosses rule all aspects of society directly--is driven by the inevitable tendency of imperialism towards war. When their system is threatened, the rulers put any pretense of democracy aside.

This election saw crude efforts by the U.S. bosses to rig the process—and especially the capitalist media coverage—in Clinton's favor. What they failed to anticipate is that nearly half the voters would support the volatile Trump. The winner's false "populism" and racist scapegoating found traction with white working-class voters, including women--most notably in the Rust Belt, where Trump seized votes that Obama had won four years earlier.

The rulers' problems aren't confined to the U.S. The Brexit vote in the UK, the Colombian voters' rejection of the government's peace deal with guerrilla fighters, far-right racist Marine Le Pen's strong polling in the upcoming French presidential election—all of these reflect a worldwide crisis of capitalism.

Fight Back!

Elections are the bosses' mechanism to hold on to power by giving us the illusion of choice. But just knowing the system is broken isn't enough. To liberate our class, Black, Latin, Asian and white workers must unite to defeat the bosses' ideology of racism, sexism, individualism and anti-communism.

Trump's open racism is a danger to the working class, but it cannot defeat us. Thousands across the country have erupting in protest, shutting down highways and burning the American flag. Let's bring our communist slogan, "It's not just Trump, it's capitalism." One thing is clear: All sections of the working class are fed up with business as usual. The way out of this capitalist hell? Building Progressive Labor Party and the struggle for communist revolution.

Progressive Labor Party has much work to do. Communists have no reason to be depressed by this election. Fundamentally, our goal remains the same: to build multiracial unity and overthrow the bosses' murderous system. But in a time when open racism has gained a mass base and a public platform at the highest levels, our challenge—and our opportunity—is even greater than before.

Much of the pro-Trump movement consisted of white workers misled by racism to act against their own class interests. It's our task to wage a principled struggle with all workers against the twin dangers of racism and identity politics. We must redouble our efforts on the job, in the schools, and in the streets. Only a mass movement for communist revolution can smash the racist horror show of capitalism for all time.✪